



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Statement on the Passing of Marguerite LaMotte  
by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas**

I am deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Marguerite LaMotte and extend my heartfelt condolences to her family. I worked with Marguerite for 25 years on education-related issues, and I can say she truly was a standard bearer for children. She never stopped striving to improve the learning environment, conditions and outcomes for the students of Los Angeles Unified School District.

I knew her when she was principal of Washington Preparatory High School, where she not only distinguished herself with strong and revolutionized education at the school, she inspired me and others with her determination. One well-known story about Marguerite is how in the late 1990s, when a raucous crowd of maybe 100 young people began to brawl about a block away from the school, Marguerite threw herself into the middle, without any regard for her safety, and personally broke it up. She was fearless and faithful in her work.

Some of her tenacity and perseverance came from her personal background. She grew up in the deep South, coming of age during the era of Brown vs. the Board of Education, and she had a sweeping understanding of history. She knew that coming from a low-income family was no reason a child should receive a second-rate education. Marguerite had been in poor health some time, but it is worth noting that she passed away while attending the California School Boards Association annual meeting, still working, fighting and advocating for the district's children, who she always saw as her own.

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